

1                                   **MR. JAMES O'DELL**

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3                   CHAIRMAN JAMES:   Mr. James O'Dell.

4                   MR. O'DELL:   Good afternoon. Thank you for giving me  
5 the opportunity to come before the Gaming Commission to express  
6 my views of the gaming industry's impact on my life, my community  
7 and that of my friends.

8                   My name is Jim O'Dell. I'm a table game supervisor  
9 for Harrah's Joliet. My experience in gaming before I worked for  
10 a casino was none. In four years I have advanced from a dealer  
11 to a floor supervisor. I have also become a trainer for new  
12 employees. The educational and technical training I have  
13 received through Harrah's has enabled me to be prepared for these  
14 advancements.

15                  The continual educational classes that I receive in  
16 management training, sexual harassment training, time management  
17 and enhancing people skills have all helped me advance in my job  
18 and my personal growth. I live in a small town and the training  
19 I've received in valuing cultural diversity and people  
20 interaction skills have helped me to become a better neighbor and  
21 a community citizen.

22                  The gaming industry has made quite an impact on my  
23 life financially. The compensation I receive has given me the  
24 opportunity to impact my community buying power. Through my  
25 employment at Harrah's I have bought a new car and am in the  
26 process of buying a home. I give more to charities than I ever  
27 did before and I also donate to Illinois State University and  
28 Harrah's matches that donation.

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1 I consider the people I work with at Harrah's to be  
2 my friends, my second family. Through Harrah's 1,400 of us have  
3 been given the opportunity for economic growth, to give back to  
4 our communities. They have taken people with little to no job  
5 experience, people looking to advance their career opportunities,  
6 as well as people who were laid off from the jobs they had held  
7 many years before and trained them in an industry that has more  
8 advancement possibilities than many other industries.

9 The economic impact of our spending power has  
10 affected our local area and has had a ripple effect that goes  
11 well beyond the immediate area to communities 20, 50 and 100  
12 miles away throughout the entire state of Illinois. Through  
13 Harrah's I have become more involved with my community by  
14 volunteering to serve on committees and work at charity events.  
15 Harrah's encourages community involvement, to give back, to make  
16 a difference. Through Harrah's emergency assistance relief trust  
17 program or HEART, employees who experience a personal emergency  
18 such as a natural disaster are assured that assistance will be  
19 given.

20 These funds are raised by employees, for Harrah's  
21 employees. I know of no other company that goes to so much  
22 length to be assured that their employees are taken care of. As  
23 a table game supervisor, the people I meet at the casino come  
24 with entertainment on their minds, a night out, an afternoon  
25 away, a few hours of fun. We provide that window of escape,  
26 that fun and excitement.

27 I am proud to work in the gaming industry and at  
28 Harrah's Joliet casino. I thank you for the opportunity to tell

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1 you about the impact the industry and Harrah's has made on my  
2 life. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

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